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American Express promotes travel, but not to Colorado

Two months ago, in this space, I wrote an open letter to Harvey Golub, CEO of American Express Company. As a resident of Colorado and an American Express cardholder in good standing for 24 years, I was disturbed by the behavior of one of Golub's subsidiary companies, Travel and Leisure magazine. Let me review.

In two consecutive issues of T&L, publicity was given to the boycott of this state proposed by gay activists seeking to punish us for our vote on Amendment 2. In February, a slanted piece entitled "Colorado Boycott — Yes or No?" offered next to nothing on the "no" side, and falsely asserted that "Colorado is still reeling from a tourism boycott." Reeling? Really? I thought we just turned in a record winter season.

In March, another T&L story about the newly reconstructed interstate highway through Glenwood Canyon inexplicably, and wholly out of context, concluded with this snide little gem: "And if you're boycotting Colorado, don't stop till you cross the state line."

Now, T&L is a slick little travel publication. It's not The New Republic or National Review. It's not generally interested in stirring up controversy. Vacations are what you take to get away from that kind of thing. In essence, T&L exists to promote the use of The Card for air travel, hotels and dining. So my theory was that certain individuals at the magazine were promoting their own political agenda at the expense of their parent company and our state.

This was confirmed when I later discovered that the gratuitous line about not stopping till you cross the state line wasn't written, at all, by Fred Smith, the author of the piece in question, but was added by a T&L editor in a transparent move to offset a favorable depiction of Colorado with an unpaid political announcement for gay militants. For good measure, T&L also placed, adjacent to the Glenwood Canyon story, an item promoting a new newsletter for gay travelers started by former American Express employees.

I don't particularly care what American Express's policies are regarding homosexual employees, but I do care about the use of a company publication to promote a political cause. I expressed that concern to CEO Golub and asked for his assurance that it wouldn't be continued. I explained that I couldn't support his company's economic interests with my patronage if his company threatened my economic interests at home.

It took about two months and more than 50 follow-up phone calls before I could coax a response out of American Express, but I'm nothing if not persistent. Golub wouldn't talk to me, nor would any of his executives at American Express or T&L. Finally, they dispatched a lower level manager of public affairs — insulating top management as much as possible from the affair — to write a vacuous memo which they faxed to me last week.

The memo was standard public relations ca-ca, unresponsive to my questions.

I have no illusions that I, or even a few thousand Coloradans, can bring a $27 billion company like this to its knees by cancelling our cards, but I can't see giving them any more of my business, either. Apparently, American Express has calculated that the benefits of pandering to gay militants, nationally, exceed the probable costs of angering cardholders and card-accepting merchants in a small state like Colorado.

They may be right, but a shot across their bow might make a lasting impression for the next time.

Rosen's radio talk show can be heard on 85-KOA radio in Denver, weekdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

this quagmire are the four main factions who have fought for the past 14 years.

Three now fight each other at the polls under the flag of a party symbol. The fourth, the ultra-Maoist Khmer Rouge, has denounced the election as "a U.N. farce," withdrawn from the peace process and resumed a guerrilla war. Seventeen miniparties also are fielding candidates.

The front-runner, by the sheer weight of its arsenal and 200,000 troops, is Hun Sen's Cambodian Peoples Party, whose members come from the puppet government installed by the Vietnamese after their invasion in 1979.

The Vietnamese ousted Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime, which is accused of having exterminated or worked to death at least a million Cambodians during its "killing fields"

thugs have systematically terrorized the opposition, according to U.N. reports.

Tens of thousands of Vietnamese, fearing a pogrom if Hun Sen is defeated, already have navigated down the Mekong River to Vietnam on their houseboats, running a gantlet of bandits and official toll collectors.

At his Khmer Institute of Democracy, Jeldres has a replica of a polling booth to show people how to vote. He is bombarded constantly with the questions: "Will the vote be secret? Will I get into trouble for voting against the government?"

"In this country people are still afraid to speak their mind," he said. "They are still afraid to mail a letter to the authorities, and they can't believe free movement is allowed in a democratic society."

This painting by William R. Iseminger of the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, circa A.D. 1150, is on the book jacket of "The Founders of America."

America's past recounted through stories of Indians

Vivid picture painted of thriving, violent times

"The Founders of America"
By **Francis Jennings**
W.W. Norton, $27.50

Reviewed by **Victor Greto**
Gazette Telegraph

One of the few benefits to come from the politicized Columbus quincentenary of 1992 is an emphasis on American Indian history. American-history textbooks will never be the same

mate year that migrating peoples surged out of Alaska and/or the Canadian Northwest, the Mesoamerican city of Tula was overthrown and destroyed, and Chaco Canyon was abandoned. This activity marks the 14th century as perhaps one of the most convulsive in American history before the European invasion.

With the "Dark Ages" of the European invasion came the end

fought the tribes directly with mixed results. Through all the events the issues remained the same: sovereignty and ownership of the land." In terms of both, the Delawares — and by generalization other American Indians — hadn't a chance.

It is with his telling of the advent of the United States and the 19th century that Jennings gives way to self-righteous anger toward such American

3. "The Way Things Ought to Be," Rush Limbaugh. Pocket Books, $22
4. "Healing and the Mind," Bill Moyers. Doubleday, $25
5. "Beating the Street," Peter Lynch, Simon & Schuster, $28
6. "Harvey Penick's Little Red Book," Harvey Penick & Bud Shrake. Simon & Schuster, $19
7. "The Real Anita Hill," David Brock. Free Press. $24.95
8. "Thinking Out Loud," Anna Quindlen. Random House. $22
9. "Turmoil and Triumph," George P. Schultz. Scribners. $30
10. "Conduct Unbecoming," Randy Shilts. St. Martin's. $26.95

PAPERBACK

MASS MARKET
1. "Jurassic Park," Michael Crichton. Ballantine, $5.99
2. "The Pelican Brief," John Grisham. Dell, $6.99
3. "The Firm," John Grisham. Island/Dell, $5.99
4. "Darkest Hour," V.C. Andrews. Pocket Books. $5.99
5. "Shadowfires," Dean R. Koontz. Berkley. $6.99
6. "Waiting to Exhale," Terry McMillan. Pocket Books. $5.99